

## Governor Phil Murphy

# ICYMI: NJBPU Awards 165 MW of Community Solar to 105 Projects in Pilot Year 2

10/28/2021

*All Projects will Benefit Low-to-Moderate-Income & Historically Underserved Communities*

**Trenton, NJ**—October 28, 2021—The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) today approved 105 applications to participate in Program Year Two of the State’s Community Solar Energy Pilot Program. The projects represent almost 165 MW of solar energy capacity, enough to power an estimated 33,000 homes. The Community Solar Program is a key component of Governor Murphy’s clean energy agenda aimed at achieving 100 percent clean energy by 2050. All of the approved awards will serve low-and-moderate-income (LMI) communities. Board Order (<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/pdf/boardorders/2021/20211028/8J%20ORDER%20Community%20Solar%20PY2%20Awards.pdf>)

“Our Community Solar Pilot Program is a national model for clean energy equity and environmental justice,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “This program not only makes solar available to those in historically underserved communities, but also will spur economic growth and create career opportunities for a diverse, more inclusive workforce. Community solar is a key pillar in our commitment to transition New Jersey away from harmful emissions and towards 100 percent clean energy by 2050.”

“I am proud of what we have accomplished in just two years of our Community Solar Pilot Program,” **said NJBPU President Joseph L. Fiordaliso**. “Community Solar is a critical component of our solar programs in making sure that the clean energy and cost savings of solar are available to everyone. It is especially important that these benefits are available to environmental justice and low-income communities when they have been underserved for so long. I look forward to making our successful pilot program into a permanent program.”

A community solar project is a solar array whose output is divided among multiple participants, known as subscribers. A subscriber can be a home or business that wants to use renewable energy but does not have a solar array on-site, for example if they rent and lack control of their roof, live in an apartment or multi-family building, or cannot afford the cost of a solar installation.

With community solar, LMI households will be able to participate in a more equitable solar market through projects located within their electric public utility’s distribution territory.

Today’s approved projects will all allocate at least 51% of their capacity to low- and moderate-income participants. They will all be located on landfills, brownfields, or rooftops. The approved applicants include government entities and private developers.

The NJBPU received 412 applications, representing almost 804 MW. Under the NJBPU’s review and approval process, applications were first reviewed for administrative completeness, then scored by an Evaluation Committee, based on the information provided in the applications and following the scoring rubric issued by the Board in Appendix C of the Program Year Two Application Form.

Applications were scored out of a maximum of 100 possible points and were then ordered from the highest scored to the lowest scored, with the highest scored projects within each Electric Distribution Company service territory being recommended for conditional approval by the Board. The conditional approval is contingent on projects maintaining compliance with all applicable rules and regulations.

Earlier this month, President Fiordaliso announced that the Board would be taking steps aimed at making the Community Solar Pilot Program permanent. Staff will be organizing a stakeholder process to discuss the design of the permanent program. Staff anticipates that this stakeholder process will begin early next year. This process will build upon comments received in response to the Solar Successor Program Straw Proposal in April and May 2021. Because of this decision, there will not be a Program Year Three of the Pilot Program, but rather the BPU will move directly into the permanent program which is anticipated to be up and running next year.

In Program Year One of the Pilot Program, the Board received a total of 252 applications representing more than 650 MW of total capacity, and approved 45 applications providing almost 78 MW in solar energy capacity.

## Governor Phil Murphy

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